

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the paragraph at page 48, lines 12-17 with:

*Isolation of Rat  $\beta$ -NGF cDNA.* Rat  $\beta$ -NGF was isolated from rat SCs by RT-PCR. PCR was performed with primer 1 (5'-atataagcttcacccacccagtc-3') (SEQ ID NO:3) and primer II (5'-atataggatcctcatcttgagcttcctg-3') (SEQ ID NO:4) using mutants as templates to introduce HindIII and XbaI sites at both ends of the cDNA encoding rat  $\beta$ -NGF. The absence of nucleotide misincorporation during PCR was checked by sequencing. PCR amplification (Perkin Elmer GeneAmp PCR System 2400) was conducted at 94°C for 30 s during denaturation, 55°C during 30 s primer annealing, and 72°C for 30 s during primer extension.

Please replace the paragraphs at page 51, lines 28 and 29 with:

(1) 5'-ATAAGCTTGCCGCCATGTCCATGTTGTTCTA-3' (SEQ ID NO:5)

(2) 5'TATATCTAGATCTCACAGCCTTCCTGC-3' (SEQ ID NO:6)